



THE PEW RESEARCH CENTER  
For The People & The Press

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Rising Prices Close in on Jobs as Top Economic Worry

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## Republicans Are Losing Ground on the Deficit, But Obama's Not Gaining

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## Rising Prices Close in on Jobs as Top Economic Worry

# Republicans Are Losing Ground on the Deficit, But Obama's Not Gaining

As the budget debate moves into a crucial phase, far fewer Americans say that Republicans in Congress have the better approach to the budget deficit than did so in November, shortly after the GOP's sweeping election victories. The GOP has lost ground on the deficit among political independents and, surprisingly, among key elements of the Republican base, including Tea Party supporters.

However, the public is no more supportive of Barack Obama's approach to the budget deficit than it was in November. Rather, there has been a sharp rise in the percentage saying there is not much difference between Obama's approach and that of congressional Republicans – 52% say that now, up from just 33% in November.

The shift in opinion has been particularly dramatic among Republicans, Republican-leaning independents and Tea Party supporters. Shortly after the November election, 76% of Tea Party supporters said Republicans in Congress had a better approach to the budget deficit while just 16% said there was not much difference between their approach and Obama's. Today, 52% of Tea Party supporters say the GOP has a better approach and 39% say there is not much difference in how the two sides approach the deficit.

The latest nationwide survey by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, conducted March 8-14 among 1,525 adults, finds that the public's economic worries also have changed substantially over the past few months.

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### More See "Not Much Difference" Between Obama, GOP on Deficit

<i>Who has better approach to the budget deficit?</i>	<b>Nov 2010</b> %	<b>Mar 2011</b> %	<b>Change</b>
Barack Obama	24	20	-4
Reps in Congress	35	21	-14
Not much difference	33	52	+19
Don't know	<u>8</u>	<u>7</u>	
	100	100	

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Mar. 8-14, 2011. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

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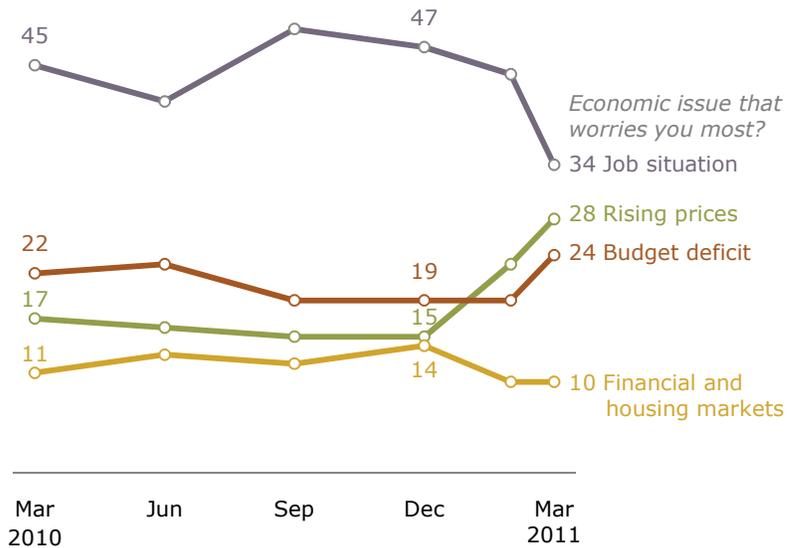
While the job situation is the top economic concern, the percentage citing rising prices as their biggest economic worry has nearly doubled from 15% in December to 28% today. And at 24%, the number saying the federal budget deficit is their top concern also has risen, from 19% in December and February.

Roughly a third (34%) say the job situation is their biggest economic concern, but this is down substantially from 44% a month ago and 47% as recently as December.

While deficit concerns are growing, there is broad opposition to raising taxes and making changes to Social Security and Medicare to reduce the budget deficit. Fully 67% oppose raising taxes and nearly as many (65%) oppose making changes in Social Security and Medicare.

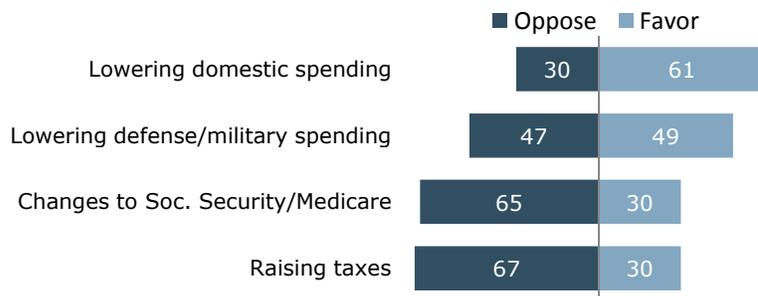
Of four possible options for cutting the deficit, only one – lowering domestic spending – draws majority support. Roughly six-in-ten (61%) are in favor of cutting domestic spending while just 30% are opposed. The public is divided over lowering military spending (49% favor vs. 47% oppose). The public is divided over lowering military spending (49% favor vs. 47% oppose) to reduce the deficit.

### More Cite Inflation, Deficit as Top Economic Concerns; Fewer Cite Job Situation



PEW RESEARCH CENTER Mar. 8-14, 2011 QB16.

### Deficit Reduction Starts with Domestic Cutbacks



PEW RESEARCH CENTER Mar. 8-14, 2011. QB72a-d.

As Congress considers a new stopgap spending bill, nearly half of Americans (49%) say that the debate over the deficit and spending has been generally rude and disrespectful while just 27% say the debate has been polite and respectful. In contrast to attitudes about the deficit and government spending, which are divided along partisan lines, there is agreement about the tone of the debate: 48% of Republicans and Democrats, and 57% of independents, say the debate has been rude and disrespectful.

## Neither Side Has Edge on Deficit

Following last fall's midterm elections, more Americans said that the Republicans in Congress than President Obama had a better approach to the budget deficit (35% to 24%). In the new survey, just 21% say that Republicans have a better approach to the budget deficit, down 14

points from November. About the same percentage (20%) says Obama has a better approach, which is little changed since then (24%).

Over this period, the percentage saying there is not much difference between the two sides has jumped from 33% to 52%.

Currently, 52% of Republicans say that their party has a better approach to the deficit than Obama,

but 41% say there is not much difference. In November, 69% said the GOP had a better approach and 21% said there was not much difference.

The proportion of Tea Party supporters who say Republicans in Congress have a better approach than Obama has fallen 24 points – from 76% to 52% – since November.

Independents also are far less supportive of the Republicans' approach to the budget deficit. In November, 37% favored the GOP's approach, while fewer than half as many (17%) preferred Obama's; 40% said there was not much difference. In the new survey, 17% of independents say Republicans have a better approach, 13% prefer Obama's approach while 62% say there is not much difference. Much of the change has come among Republican-leaning independents. Today just 35% of Republican-leaning independents say the GOP has a better approach to the deficit, down from 61% in November.

### Fewer Republicans, Tea Party Supporters Say GOP Has Better Approach to Deficit

Who has better approach to the budget deficit?	Nov 2010		Mar 2011		Change in Repts
	Reps in Congress	Not much diff	Reps in Congress	Not much diff	
Total	35	33	21	52	-14
Republican	69	21	52	41	-17
Democrat	7	33	5	47	-2
Independent	37	40	17	62	-20
<i>Among inds</i>					
Lean Rep	61	30	35	56	-26
Lean Dem	16	45	3	63	-13
<i>Tea Party</i>					
Agree	76	16	52	39	-24
Disagree	16	31	8	43	-8
No opinion	22	43	16	62	-6

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Mar. 8-14, 2011. QB73.

## Mixed Views of Impact of Spending Cuts on Jobs

A modest plurality (41%) says that if the federal government makes major spending cuts to reduce the deficit, these reductions will not have much of an effect on the job situation. Among those who see the cuts have an impact, nearly twice as many say they will hurt (34%) rather than help (18%) the job situation.

Democrats and independents are about twice as likely to say that major cuts will hurt rather than help the job situation; 35% of Democrats and 45% of independents say spending cuts will not have much of an effect either way.

About as many Republicans say deep spending cuts will hurt (27%) as help (25%) the job situation; a plurality (41%) sees them having a negligible impact. Tea Party supporters are among the only groups in which slightly more see spending cuts helping (32%) rather than hurting (23%) the job situation; 39% say they will not have much an effect either way.

### More Say Spending Cuts Will Hurt Rather than Help Job Situation

<i>Impact of major spending cuts on job situation...</i>	<b>Help</b> %	<b>Hurt</b> %	<b>Not have much effect</b> %	<b>Other/DK</b> %
Total	18	34	41	7=100
Republican	25	27	41	6=100
Democrat	18	39	35	8=100
Independent	15	34	45	6=100

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Mar. 8-14, 2011. QB74.  
Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

## Approaches to Deficit Reduction

Of four broad approaches to tackling the federal budget deficit, only reductions in domestic spending are broadly supported. By two-to-one (61% vs. 30%) more favor than oppose lowering domestic spending as a way to reduce the budget deficit. The public is divided about evenly (49% favor, 47% oppose) when it comes to lowering defense and military spending, and opposition outweighs support by wide margins when it comes to raising taxes (67% oppose) or making changes to Social Security or Medicare (65% oppose).

### More Support For Cuts in Defense Spending than in '05

<i>Favor each as way to reduce budget deficit ...</i>	<b>Mar 2005</b> %	<b>Mar 2011</b> %	<b>Change</b>
Lowering domestic spending	54	61	+7
Lowering defense spending	35	49	+14
Raising taxes	31	30	-1
Changes to Social Security/Medicare	--	30	--

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There is considerably more support for lowering defense and military spending now than there was in March 2005. In the new survey 49% favor lowering defense spending; just 35% favored defense spending cuts in 2005. The public also is slightly more supportive of cuts in domestic spending (61% today, 54% then).

While there are significant partisan divisions on all of these deficit reduction approaches, partisan views differ most when it comes to defense spending. By a 57% to 40% margin Democrats favor lowering defense and military spending to deal with the deficit. By a 65% to 33% margin Republicans are opposed.

On domestic spending, majorities across party lines favor reductions, though the sentiment is broader among Republicans (71% favor) than among Democrats (54%). And when it comes to raising taxes or changing entitlements, majorities of Democrats, Republicans and independents are opposed.

Independents tend to agree with Democrats in favoring cuts to defense and military spending, while only Republicans are opposed. But independent views are closer to Republicans when it comes to changing entitlements – 36% of Republicans and 35% of independents favor entitlement changes, compared with only 22% of Democrats.

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### Bipartisan Opposition to Tax Increases, Entitlement Changes

			Total	Rep	Dem	Ind
<i>Ways to reduce the budget deficit...</i>			%	%	%	%
Lowering domestic spending	Favor		61	71	54	60
	Oppose		30	22	35	31
Lowering defense spending	Favor		49	33	57	52
	Oppose		47	65	40	45
Raising taxes	Favor		30	20	37	30
	Oppose		67	76	61	67
Changes to Social Security/Medicare	Favor		30	36	22	35
	Oppose		65	59	75	61
N				382	503	570

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On the controversial deficit cutting approaches – defense cuts, taxes and entitlements – college graduates are substantially more supportive of action than those without college degrees. A 61% majority of college graduates favors lowering defense and military spending, while more oppose than support such cuts among those without college degrees. And while tax hikes and entitlement changes are not popular in any group, each approach is supported by roughly four-in-ten college graduates, compared with fewer than three-in-ten people without college degrees.

Not surprisingly, the idea of changing entitlements is particularly sensitive to older Americans. Fully 75% of people 65 and older oppose changing Social Security and Medicare as a way to reduce the budget deficit, and 75% of those 50 to 64 agree. But younger people are less opposed to entitlement changes. In particular, among adults younger than 30, barely half (51%) oppose changing Social Security and Medicare, while 44% express support.

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### College Graduates Support More Deficit Reduction Options

		Coll grad	Some coll	HS or Less
<i>Ways to reduce the budget deficit..</i>		%	%	%
Lowering domestic spending	Favor	63	57	61
	Oppose	31	35	27
Lowering defense spending	Favor	61	44	44
	Oppose	38	53	51
Raising taxes	Favor	42	29	23
	Oppose	55	67	74
Changes to Social Security/Medicare	Favor	40	27	26
	Oppose	57	69	69
N		553	390	578

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### Entitlements On the Table for Younger Americans?

<i>Changes in Social Security and Medicare as a way to reduce the budget deficit?</i>	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+
	%	%	%	%
Favor	44	32	23	20
Oppose	51	63	75	75
Don't know	5	5	2	4
	100	100	100	100
N	212	426	467	405

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Mar. 8-14, 2011. QB72a-d.

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For more on the public's attitudes regarding government spending and proposals for reducing the budget deficit, see:

***Fewer Want Spending to Grow, But Most Cuts Remain Unpopular, Feb. 10, 2011.*** This report showed that while the public generally favors cuts in domestic spending, there is little support for cuts in specific programs. Nonetheless, the public is less inclined to favor increased spending for many programs than in the past.

***Deficit Solutions Meet With Public Skepticism, Dec. 9, 2010.*** The public disapproves of most specific proposals aimed at reducing the budget deficit. Despite the broad reluctance to see changes in entitlement programs, a solid majority approves of making more of high earners' income subject to Social Security tax.

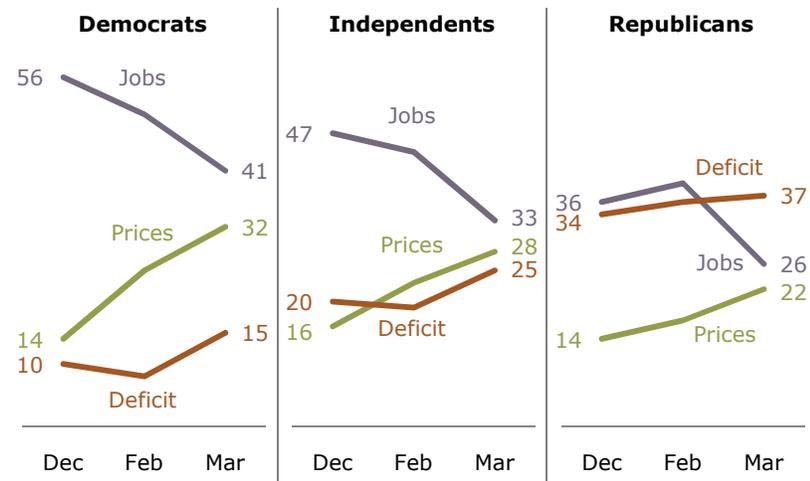
### A Shift in Top Economic Concerns

Over the course of the last three months, the number of Americans who cite rising prices as their biggest economic worry has nearly doubled from 15% in December to 28% today.

And at 24%, the number saying the federal budget deficit is their top concern has also risen over just the past month.

The job situation remains the most widely cited economic concern – 34% say it worries them more than anything else – but this is down substantially from 44% a month ago and 47% as recently as December.

#### Deficit Now Top Republican Economic Worry, Inflation Concerns Rise Across Party Lines



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The focus on prices has risen across party lines, as 32% of Democrats, 28% of independents, and 22% of Republicans now say that rising prices represent their top

economic worry today. And the share citing jobs as their number one concern is down across party lines, particularly among Republicans (26%) and independents (33%). The job situation remains the broadest concern among Democrats (41%), though this, too, is down from 56% in December.

Republicans and Democrats differ most in their level of concern about the federal budget deficit. Among Republicans, the deficit is the top economic concern, at 37%. By comparison, just 15% of Democrats cite the budget deficit as their top economic worry. Independents' concerns are divided, with 25% citing the deficit, 28% rising prices, and 33% the job situation as their top economic worry.

Nearly half (46%) of Americans who agree with the Tea Party cite the deficit as their top economic concern, more than double the number among those who disagree with (20%) or have no opinion about (18%) the Tea Party.

Aside from partisanship, deficit concerns are broadest among more educated and higher income Americans, as well as among whites and among men. By contrast, inflation concerns are broadest among those with less education and lower incomes, as well as among women.

Economic worries also differ by age. Among adults under age 65, a 36% plurality cites the job situation as their top concern, compared with 24% of Americans age 65 and older. Seniors, by contrast, are more likely to cite the budget deficit as their top concern than those who are under 65 (34% vs. 22%).

### Economic Concerns Differ by Gender, Age, Income

	Job situation	Rising prices	Budget deficit	Markets
	%	%	%	%
Total	34	28	24	10
Men	33	23	<b>29</b>	10
Women	35	<b>31</b>	19	11
18-29	<b>41</b>	27	21	7
30-49	<b>34</b>	28	22	13
50-64	<b>35</b>	27	23	11
65+	24	28	<b>34</b>	8
White	33	27	<b>26</b>	11
Black	40	32	15	9
Hispanic	33	33	18	10
College grad+	33	18	<b>33</b>	13
Some college	35	<b>27</b>	23	12
HS or less	34	<b>34</b>	19	8
<i>HH income</i>				
\$75k or more	30	19	<b>34</b>	<b>15</b>
\$30k-\$74,999	33	<b>29</b>	25	10
Less than \$30k	<b>38</b>	<b>34</b>	15	7
<i>Tea Party</i>				
Agree with	22	20	<b>46</b>	8
Disagree with	<b>40</b>	24	20	13
No opinion	<b>36</b>	<b>32</b>	18	10

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Mar. 8-14, 2011. QB16.  
**Bold** numbers show cells that are significantly higher than in comparison group (i.e. more men than women).

## National Satisfaction Still Low

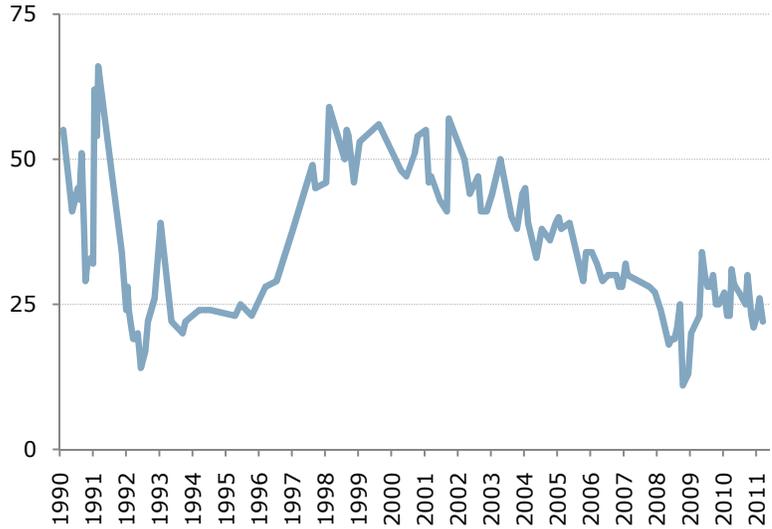
Despite changing perspectives on which economic problem is the greatest concern, the public's overall assessment of national conditions has changed little. Just 22% of Americans say they are satisfied with the state of the nation, while 73% are dissatisfied.

This is significantly better than the historic lows in the immediate wake of the 2008 market crash; in October 2008 just 11% of Americans were satisfied while 86% were dissatisfied. Yet the current mood is on par with the lowest measures over the course of Obama's term in office, and down substantially from the 34% who were satisfied with national conditions in May of 2009.

To the extent that the public's mood has soured over the past two years, the shift has occurred mainly among Democrats. In May 2009, 44% of Democrats were satisfied with national conditions. That dropped to 35% by March 2010, and stands at just 25% today. About

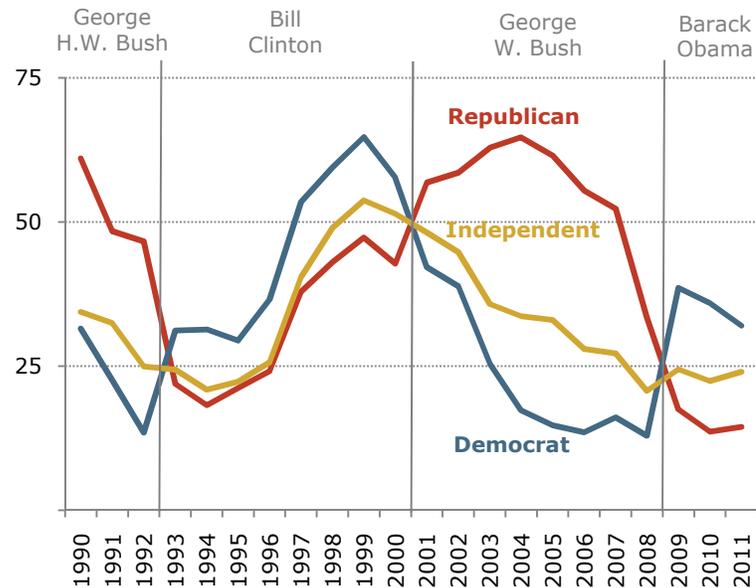
### Satisfaction Levels Remains Low

Percent satisfied with the way things are going in the country today



### Partisan Satisfaction by Administration

Satisfaction levels by party identification, year averages.



PEW RESEARCH CENTER Mar. 8-14, 2011. QB2.

the same percentage of independents (24%) expresses positive views of national conditions, while Republicans are less upbeat (14%).

The partisan gap in national satisfaction today is comparable to previous time periods. As a rule, satisfaction is higher among members of the president's party. Since 1990, Democrats were significantly more satisfied with national conditions than Republicans during both the Clinton and Obama administration, while Republicans were significantly more satisfied under both Bush administrations. Looking at yearly averages, the partisan gap reached a peak in 2004, when 65% of Republicans were satisfied, compared with just 17% of Democrats. So far in 2011, the partisan divide is much smaller: an average of 32% of Democrats and 14% of Republicans have expressed satisfaction during the first three months of this year.

## About the Surveys

Most of the analysis in this report is based on telephone interviews conducted March 8-14, 2011 among a national sample of 1,525 adults 18 years of age or older living in the continental United States (1,005 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 520 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 242 who had no landline telephone). The survey was conducted by interviewers at Princeton Data Source under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International. A combination of landline and cell phone random digit dial samples were used; both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish. Respondents in the landline sample were selected by randomly asking for the youngest adult male or female who is now at home. Interviews in the cell sample were conducted with the person who answered the phone, if that person was an adult 18 years of age or older. For detailed information about our survey methodology, see <http://people-press.org/methodology/>

The combined landline and cell phone sample are weighted using an iterative technique that matches gender, age, education, race, Hispanic origin, region, and population density to parameters from the March 2010 Census Bureau's Current Population Survey. The sample also is weighted to match current patterns of telephone status and relative usage of landline and cell phones (for those with both), based on extrapolations from the 2010 National Health Interview Survey. The weighting procedure also accounts for the fact that respondents with both landline and cell phones have a greater probability of being included in the combined sample and adjusts for household size within the landline sample. Sampling errors and statistical tests of significance take into account the effect of weighting. The following table shows the sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey:

<b>Group</b>	<b>Sample Size</b>	<b>Plus or minus ...</b>
Total sample	1,525	3.0 percentage points
Republicans	382	6.5 percentage points
Democrats	503	5.5 percentage points
Independents	570	5.0 percentage points
<i>Tea party movement:</i>		
Agree with movement	324	7.0 percentage points
Disagree	420	6.0 percentage points
No opinion	743	4.5 percentage points
18-29	212	8.5 percentage points
30-49	426	6.0 percentage points
50-64	467	5.5 percentage points
65+	405	6.0 percentage points

Sample sizes and sampling errors for other subgroups are available upon request.

Some of the analysis in this report is based on telephone interviews conducted March 10-13, 2011 among a national sample of 1,001 adults 18 years of age or older living in the continental United States (670 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 331 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 154 who had no landline telephone). The survey was conducted by

interviewers at Princeton Data Source under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International. A combination of landline and cell phone random digit dial samples were used; both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International. Interviews were conducted in English. Respondents in the landline sample were selected by randomly asking for the youngest adult male or female who is now at home. Interviews in the cell sample were conducted with the person who answered the phone, if that person was an adult 18 years of age or older.

The combined landline and cell phone sample are weighted using an iterative technique that matches gender, age, education, race, Hispanic origin, region, and population density to parameters from the March 2010 Census Bureau's Current Population Survey. The sample also is weighted to match current patterns of telephone status based on extrapolations from the 2010 National Health Interview Survey. The weighting procedure also accounts for the fact that respondents with both landline and cell phones have a greater probability of being included in the combined sample and adjusts for household size within the landline sample. Sampling errors and statistical tests of significance take into account the effect of weighting. The following table shows the sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey:

<b>Group</b>	<b>Sample Size</b>	<b>Plus or minus ...</b>
Total sample	1001	4.0 percentage points

Sample sizes and sampling errors for other subgroups are available upon request.

In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

## About the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press

The Pew Research Center for the People & the Press is an independent opinion research group that studies attitudes toward the press, politics and public policy issues. We are sponsored by The Pew Charitable Trusts and are one of seven projects that make up the Pew Research Center, a nonpartisan "fact tank" that provides information on the issues, attitudes and trends shaping America and the world.

The Center's purpose is to serve as a forum for ideas on the media and public policy through public opinion research. In this role it serves as an important information resource for political leaders, journalists, scholars, and public interest organizations. All of our current survey results are made available free of charge.

All of the Center's research and reports are collaborative products based on the input and analysis of the entire Center staff consisting of:

Andrew Kohut, Director  
Scott Keeter, Director of Survey Research  
Carroll Doherty and Michael Dimock, Associate Directors  
Michael Remez, Senior Writer  
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Jacob Poushter, Research Analyst  
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**PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS  
2011 MARCH POLITICAL TYPOLOGY SURVEY A  
FINAL TOPLINE**

Survey B: March 8-14, 2011 N=1525

**NO QUESTION 1**

**ASK ALL SURVEY B:**

Q.B2 All in all, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way things are going in this country today?

	Satis- <u>fied</u>	Dis- <u>satisfied</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>		<u>fied</u>	<u>satisfied</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>
				Late November, 2005	34	59	7
Mar 8-14, 2011	22	73	5	Early October, 2005	29	65	6
Feb 2-7, 2011	26	68	5	July, 2005	35	58	7
Jan 5-9, 2011	23	71	6	Late May, 2005*	39	57	4
Dec 1-5, 2010	21	72	7	February, 2005	38	56	6
Nov 4-7, 2010	23	69	8	January, 2005	40	54	6
Sep 23-26, 2010	30	63	7	December, 2004	39	54	7
Aug 25-Sep 6, 2010	25	71	5	Mid-October, 2004	36	58	6
Jun 24-27, 2010	27	64	9	July, 2004	38	55	7
May 13-16, 2010	28	64	7	May, 2004	33	61	6
Apr 21-26, 2010	29	66	5	Late February, 2004*	39	55	6
Apr 1-5, 2010	31	63	6	Early January, 2004	45	48	7
Mar 11-21, 2010	25	69	5	December, 2003	44	47	9
Mar 10-14, 2010	23	71	7	October, 2003	38	56	6
Feb 3-9, 2010	23	71	6	August, 2003	40	53	7
Jan 6-10, 2010	27	69	4	<i>April 8, 2003</i>	50	41	9
Oct 28-Nov 8, 2009	25	67	7	January, 2003	44	50	6
Sep 30-Oct 4, 2009	25	67	7	November, 2002	41	48	11
Sep 10-15, 2009 <sup>1</sup>	30	64	7	September, 2002	41	55	4
Aug 20-27, 2009	28	65	7	Late August, 2002	47	44	9
Aug 11-17, 2009	28	65	7	May, 2002	44	44	12
Jul 22-26, 2009	28	66	6	March, 2002	50	40	10
Jun 10-14, 2009	30	64	5	Late September, 2001	57	34	9
Apr 28-May 12, 2009	34	58	8	Early September, 2001	41	53	6
Apr 14-21, 2009	23	70	7	June, 2001	43	52	5
Jan 7-11, 2009	20	73	7	March, 2001	47	45	8
December, 2008	13	83	4	February, 2001	46	43	11
Early October, 2008	11	86	3	January, 2001	55	41	4
Mid-September, 2008	25	69	6	October, 2000 (RVs)	54	39	7
August, 2008	21	74	5	September, 2000	51	41	8
July, 2008	19	74	7	June, 2000	47	45	8
June, 2008	19	76	5	April, 2000	48	43	9
Late May, 2008	18	76	6	August, 1999	56	39	5
March, 2008	22	72	6	January, 1999	53	41	6
Early February, 2008	24	70	6	November, 1998	46	44	10
Late December, 2007	27	66	7	Early September, 1998	54	42	4
October, 2007	28	66	6	Late August, 1998	55	41	4
February, 2007	30	61	9	Early August, 1998	50	44	6
Mid-January, 2007	32	61	7	February, 1998	59	37	4
Early January, 2007	30	63	7	January, 1998	46	50	4
December, 2006	28	65	7	September, 1997	45	49	6
Mid-November, 2006	28	64	8	August, 1997	49	46	5
Early October, 2006	30	63	7	January, 1997	38	58	4
July, 2006	30	65	5	July, 1996	29	67	4
May, 2006*	29	65	6	March, 1996	28	70	2
March, 2006	32	63	5	October, 1995	23	73	4
January, 2006	34	61	5	June, 1995	25	73	2
	Satis-	Dis-	(VOL.)	April, 1995	23	74	3
				July, 1994	24	73	3
				March, 1994	24	71	5

<sup>1</sup> In September 10-15, 2009 and other surveys noted with an asterisk, the question was worded "Overall, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way things are going in our country today?"

**Q.B2 CONTINUED ...**

	Satis- <u>fied</u>	Dis- <u>satisfied</u>	(VOL.) DK/Ref		Satis- <u>fied</u>	Dis- <u>satisfied</u>	(VOL.) DK/Ref
October, 1993	22	73	5	November, 1991	34	61	5
September, 1993	20	75	5	<i>Gallup: Late Feb, 1991</i>	66	31	3
May, 1993	22	71	7	August, 1990	47	48	5
January, 1993	39	50	11	May, 1990	41	54	5
January, 1992	28	68	4	January, 1989	45	50	5
				September, 1988 (RVs)	50	45	5

**NO QUESTIONS 3-13****Q.B14-Q.B15 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE****ASK ALL SURVEY B:**

Q.B16 Which of the following national economic issues worries you most? **[READ AND RANDOMIZE]**

Mar 8-14 <u>2011</u>		Feb 2-7 <u>2011</u>	Dec 1-5 <u>2010</u>	Aug 25- Sep 6 <u>2010</u>	Jun 3-6 <u>2010</u>	Mar 10-14 <u>2010</u>
34	The job situation	44	47	49	41	45
28	Rising prices	23	15	15	16	17
24	The federal budget deficit	19	19	19	23	22
10	Problems in the financial and housing markets	10	14	12	13	11
3	Other <b>(VOL.)</b>	1	1	2	3	2
*	None/Not worried about any <b>(VOL.)</b>	1	1	1	1	*
1	Don't know/Refused <b>(VOL.)</b>	3	3	2	2	2

**NO QUESTIONS 18-19, 23-32, 39-46, 48-67, 69-70****Q.17, Q.B20-Q.B22, Q.33-Q.B38, Q.B47, Q.B68 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE****ASK ALL SURVEY B:**

Q.B71 Considering what the president and Congress need to deal with, do you think reducing the budget deficit should be a top priority, important but lower priority, not too important, or does it not need to be addressed this year?

Mar 8-14 <u>2011</u>		Oct <u>2005</u>	Mar <u>2005</u>
53	Top priority	42	39
33	Important but lower priority	38	46
3	Not too important	6	6
7	Does not need to be addressed this year	10	5
4	Don't know/Refused <b>(VOL.)</b>	4	4

**ASK ALL SURVEY B:**

Q.B72 Would you favor or oppose **[INSERT ITEM, RANDOMIZE]** as a way to reduce the budget deficit?

	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<b>(VOL.)</b> <u>DK/Ref</u>
a. Raising taxes			
Mar 8-14, 2011	30	67	3
October, 2005	26	70	4
March, 2005	31	66	3
b. Lowering defense and military spending			
Mar 8-14, 2011	49	47	4
October, 2005	36	58	6
March, 2005	35	60	5
c. Lowering domestic spending			
Mar 8-14, 2011	61	30	9
October, 2005	47	41	12
March, 2005	54	35	11
d. Changes to Social Security and Medicare			
Mar 8-14, 2011	30	65	4

**ASK ALL SURVEY B:**

Q.B73 Who has the better approach to the budget deficit: **[RANDOMIZE: Barack Obama/the Republicans in Congress]**, or is there not much difference?

	<u>Barack Obama</u>	<u>Republicans in Congress</u>	<u>Not much difference</u>	<b>(VOL.)</b> <u>DK/Ref</u>
Mar 8-14, 2011	20	21	52	7
Nov 4-7, 2010 <sup>2</sup>	24	35	33	8

**TREND FOR COMPARISON:**

	<u>President Clinton</u>	<u>Republicans in Congress</u>	<u>Not much difference</u>	<b>(VOL.)</b> <u>DK/Ref</u>
<i>NBC/WSJ: Dec 1996</i>	29	31	34	6
<i>NBC/WSJ: Jan 1996</i>	28	34	29	9
<i>NBC/WSJ: Oct 1995</i>	25	40	27	8
<i>NBC/WSJ: Sep 1995</i>	30	35	25	10
<i>NBC/WSJ: Jul 1995</i>	27	39	24	10
<i>NBC/WSJ: Jan 1995</i>	25	37	29	9
<i>NBC/WSJ: Nov 1994 (RVs)</i>	23	46	27	4

**ASK ALL SURVEY B:**

Q.B74 If the government makes major cuts in federal spending this year in an effort to reduce the budget deficit, do you think these cuts will **[RANDOMIZE: help the job situation/hurt the job situation]**, or not have much of an effect either way?

Mar 8-14			
<u>2011</u>			
18	Help		
34	Hurt		
41	Not much of an effect either way		
1	Mixed effect <b>(VOL.)</b>		
6	Don't know/Refused <b>(VOL.)</b>		

**NO QUESTIONS 75-89****Q.B90-Q.B92 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE**

<sup>2</sup> In November 2010 the question asked about "President Obama" and was asked as part of a list.

**ASK ALL:**

PARTY In politics TODAY, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or independent?

**ASK IF INDEP/NO PREF/OTHER/DK/REF (PARTY=3,4,5,9):**

PARTYLN As of today do you lean more to the Republican Party or more to the Democratic Party?

				(VOL.)	(VOL.)	(VOL.)	Lean	Lean
	Republican	Democrat	Independent	No preference	Other party	DK/Ref	Rep	Dem
Mar 8-14, 2011	24	33	38	3	*	2	17	15
Feb 2-7, 2011	24	31	39	3	*	2	16	16
Jan 5-9, 2011	27	32	35	4	*	2	15	14
Dec 1-5, 2010	25	33	34	5	1	2	13	14
Nov 4-7, 2010	26	30	37	4	*	2	17	13
Oct 27-30, 2010	25	34	31	6	1	4	13	11
Oct 13-18, 2010	25	31	36	4	*	3	16	13
Aug 25-Sep 6, 2010	24	32	39	2	*	2	15	17
Jul 21-Aug 5, 2010	26	33	34	4	*	3	14	14
Jun 16-20, 2010	27	34	34	3	1	2	15	15
Apr 21-26, 2010	26	33	36	3	1	3	16	13
Mar 11-21, 2010	28	34	32	3	*	3	13	12
Mar 10-14, 2010	22	33	37	6	*	3	14	13

**Yearly Totals**

2010	25.2	32.7	35.2	3.6	.4	2.8	14.5	14.1
2009	23.9	34.4	35.1	3.4	.4	2.8	13.1	15.7
2008	25.7	36.0	31.5	3.6	.3	3.0	10.6	15.2
2007	25.3	32.9	34.1	4.3	.4	2.9	10.9	17.0
2006	27.8	33.1	30.9	4.4	.3	3.4	10.5	15.1
2005	29.3	32.8	30.2	4.5	.3	2.8	10.3	14.9
2004	30.0	33.5	29.5	3.8	.4	3.0	11.7	13.4
2003	30.3	31.5	30.5	4.8	.5	2.5	12.0	12.6
2002	30.4	31.4	29.8	5.0	.7	2.7	12.4	11.6
2001	29.0	33.2	29.5	5.2	.6	2.6	11.9	11.6
2001 Post-Sept 11	30.9	31.8	27.9	5.2	.6	3.6	11.7	9.4
2001 Pre-Sept 11	27.3	34.4	30.9	5.1	.6	1.7	12.1	13.5
2000	28.0	33.4	29.1	5.5	.5	3.6	11.6	11.7
1999	26.6	33.5	33.7	3.9	.5	1.9	13.0	14.5
1998	27.9	33.7	31.1	4.6	.4	2.3	11.6	13.1
1997	28.0	33.4	32.0	4.0	.4	2.3	12.2	14.1
1996	28.9	33.9	31.8	3.0	.4	2.0	12.1	14.9
1995	31.6	30.0	33.7	2.4	.6	1.3	15.1	13.5
1994	30.1	31.5	33.5	1.3	--	3.6	13.7	12.2
1993	27.4	33.6	34.2	4.4	1.5	2.9	11.5	14.9
1992	27.6	33.7	34.7	1.5	0	2.5	12.6	16.5
1991	30.9	31.4	33.2	0	1.4	3.0	14.7	10.8
1990	30.9	33.2	29.3	1.2	1.9	3.4	12.4	11.3
1989	33	33	34	--	--	--	--	--
1987	26	35	39	--	--	--	--	--

**ASK ALL:**

TEAPARTY2 From what you know, do you agree or disagree with the Tea Party movement, or don't you have an opinion either way?

				(VOL.)	(VOL.)	Not
	Agree	Disagree	No opinion either way	Haven't heard of	Refused	heard of/ DK
Mar 8- 14, 2011	19	25	54	1	1	--
Feb 2-7, 2011 <sup>3</sup>	22	22	53	2	2	--

<sup>3</sup> In the February 2-7, 2011 survey and before, question read "...do you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree with the Tea Party movement..." In October 2010 and earlier, question was asked only of those who had heard or read a lot or a little about the Tea Party. In May through October, it was described as: "the Tea Party movement that has

**TEAPARTY2 CONTINUED...**

	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>No opinion either way</u>	<b>(VOL.)</b> <u>Haven't heard of</u>	<b>(VOL.)</b> <u>Refused</u>	<i>Not heard of/ DK</i>
Jan 5-9, 2011	24	22	50	2	1	--
Dec 1-5, 2010	22	26	49	2	2	--
Nov 4-7, 2010	27	22	49	1	1	--
Oct 27-30, 2010 (RVs)	29	25	32	--	1	13
Oct 13-18, 2010 (RVs)	28	24	30	--	1	16
Aug 25-Sep 6, 2010 (RVs)	29	26	32	--	1	13
Jul 21-Aug 5, 2010	22	18	37	--	1	21
Jun 16-20, 2010	24	18	30	--	*	27
May 20-23, 2010	25	18	31	--	1	25
Mar 11-21, 2010	24	14	29	--	1	31

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER NEWS INTEREST INDEX  
MARCH 10-13, 2011 OMNIBUS  
FINAL TOPLINE  
N=1,001**

**PEW.1-PEW.3 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED****ASK ALL:**

PEW.4 As you may know, there has been a lot of discussion in Washington recently over the federal budget deficit and government spending. From what you've seen and heard, has the tone of the debate over the federal budget deficit been **[READ AND RANDOMIZE OPTIONS]**

*TREND FOR COMPARISON:  
Debate over health care*

<u>Mar 10-13 2011</u>		<u>Sep 11-14 2009</u>
27	Generally polite and respectful [OR]	31
49	Generally rude and disrespectful	53
24	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	16

**PEW.5-PEW.8 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED**


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been involved in campaigns and protests in the U.S. over the past year." In March it was described as "the Tea Party Protests that have taken place in the U.S. over the past year."